

Remarks

In response to the final Office Action mailed February 21, 2007, the Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the rejections and that the case pass to issue in light of the remarks below.

Claims 1-24 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Anderson et al.* in view of *Brikman et al.* and in further view of *Jensen et al.* The reference relied on by the Examiner, the *Brikman et al.* reference, is entitled to the benefit of its filing date of September 11, 2002, for purposes of 35 U.S.C. § 102(e). As factually supported in the attached Declaration, the Applicants conceived and actually reduced to practice their invention, as disclosed and claimed, prior to September 11, 2002, the filing date of the *Brikman et al.* reference. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the rejections of claims 1-24 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the proposed combination of *Anderson et al.*, *Brikman et al.* and *Jensen et al.*.

Claims 21-24 are believed allowable as no analysis was provided in the Office Action as to how the proposed combination of *Anderson et al.*, *Brikman et al.* and *Jensen et al.* teach, disclose, or suggest the limitations of claims 21-24. If the Examiner deems that a subsequent Office Action is necessary, Applicants respectfully request that such Office Action be non-final.

Conclusion

The present Reply was not earlier presented because the Applicants believe that the prior amendment had placed the application in a condition for allowance. The present Reply does not raise any new issues and does not require further searching on the part of the Examiner. It is believed that the present Reply places the application in condition for allowance. Entry is therefore solicited.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants believe that the Office Action of February 21, 2007, has been fully responded to, consequently in view of the remarks in the attached Declaration and Exhibit A, Applicants respectfully submit that the application is in condition for allowance, which allowance is respectfully requested.

Please charge any fees or credit any overpayments as a result of the filing of this paper to Ford Global Technologies, LLC Deposit Account No. 06-1510.

Respectfully submitted,

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Attachments: Declaration
Exhibit A